

February 25, 2010

With continuing economic uncertainty and the challenges faced by state-managed funds and some college savings programs in other states, how can I trust that the money I put into GET will be there when I need it?

- A GET account is secure, and the state guarantee remains solid. Washington is one of only five states with a prepaid tuition plan guaranteed by state law (see <u>RCW</u> 28B.95.050). It guarantees that if future tuition increases ever require the program to pay out more money than it has available, the Legislature is required by state law to provide funding to cover the shortfall.
- A recent <u>GET Financial Solvency Study</u> (dated November 2009) completed by the Office
 of the State Actuary provides an actuarial report which was mandated by the state
 legislature last spring. It looked at a number of potential economic scenarios and the
 implications for GET. It found the GET program to be well-managed and actuarially
 sound.
- Washington's GET trust fund is valued at over \$1.2 billion and is managed conservatively by the Washington State Investment Board (WSIB). The WSIB invests all GET funds in a diversified portfolio of federal bonds (Treasury Inflation Protection Securities or TIPS) as well as US and international indexed equity funds. The WSIB's asset allocation model has roughly 40% in federal bonds, 40% in low cost US equity indexed funds, and 20% in international equity funds. Due to cash flow and expenses, a small amount is also kept in cash. This strategy provides for the greatest amount of diversification at both low risk and low cost. Administrative costs are kept as low as possible, a reserve fund is maintained and proposed tuition increases are monitored closely. We also closely monitor events related to other plans across the country.
- The Guaranteed Education Tuition program has always been self-sustaining. Our top priority is to make sure that GET is there for all families depending upon their accounts to send their children to college, and to do so without state assistance. This year, GET unit sales continue at record levels. To date Washington families have opened more than 111,000 GET accounts and over 16,500 students have already used their accounts to study at colleges, universities and vocational schools in all 50 states.
- Your account is <u>guaranteed</u> to keep pace with the rising costs of college tuition. GET is a safe and secure way for families to save for college.